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Introduction

One of the aspects that is important when learning a language is to pronounce the words of the language correctly and at the same time clearly. It is not necessary to speak English with a native language accent. However, what is really important is the way in which words are pronounced in order to be understandable and accepted.

The following chapters are based on information that had been gathered from different sources¹ in order to provide learners overviews of different components necessary in English pronunciation. It is important to consider that practice is a relevant aspect in pronunciation, that is why it is necessary to look for situations and spaces in which you can rehearse the different elements included in the following manual.

¹ Manual of American English 4th Edition / Focus on Pronunciation

Chapter 1: Vowels

The essential method by which a person learns to pronounce English is by imitating the pronunciation of English-speaking people under conditions that approach as nearly as possible those of normal communication. The first step in phonetics is to become familiar with the set of symbols that represent important sounds. The phonetic symbols are commonly used to distinguish a sound from a letter, which represents the spelling. The phonetic symbols must be placed in square brackets [] as well as in / /.

Vowels Chart

[ɑ]	far, not	[fɑr, nɑt]
[ɛ]	get, bread	[gɛt, brɛd]
[ɔ]	bought, all	[bɔt, ɔl]
[ə]	but, other	[bət, əðər]
[æ]	sad	[sæd]
[ɪ]	kiss	[kɪs]
[ʊ]	book, put	[bʊk, pʊt]
[iɪ]	see, leaf	[siɪ, liɪf]
[ey]	say, raise	[sey, reɪz]
[ow]	no, boat	[now, bowt]
[uw]	rude, cool	[ruwd, kuwl]
[ay]	die, wine	[day, wayn]
[aw]	house, now	[haws, naw]
[oy]	boy, noise	[boy, noɪz]

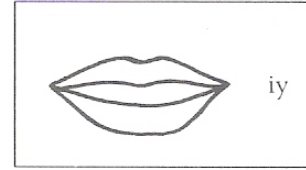
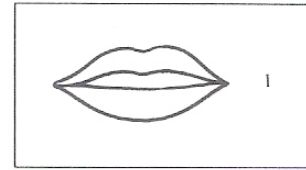
Hint: You may find phonetics symbols, which are different from the ones used in this book. Alternative symbols are given below.

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. [y = j] | 6. [ə = ʌ] | 11. [ow = ou] |
| 2. [ʃ = š] | 7. [ər = ɜ] | 12. [uw = uu, u:] |
| 3. [ʒ = ž] | 8. [ər (unstressed) = ɐ] | 13. [ay = ai] |
| 4. [tʃ = tš, č] | 9. [iɪ = ii, i:] | 14. [aw = au] |
| 5. [dʒ = dž, ĵ] | 10. [ey = ei] | 15. [oy = oi, oi] |

The Vowels [iy] – [I]

[iy] is the vowel sound in **sleep**, **clean**, and **piece**.

[iy] is a tense vowel.



- a. When **[iy]** is followed by a vowel, in the same word or in the word next to it, the **[iy]** joins the next vowel and forms a new syllable:

Sample:

Radio: /reyd**iy**ow/

Be open: /b**iy** ówpen/

- b. Pronounce the “y” and “ly” endings as **[iy]**:

Sample:

Busy: /bɪz**iy**/

Happily: /hæpəl**iy**/

- c. Pronounce the article “the” before vowels with **[iy]** and link it to the next vowel:

Sample:

The article: /ð**iy**ártikəl/

The apple: /ð**iy**æpəl/

[I] is the vowel sound in **did**, **middle**, **live** and **give**.

[I] is a lax vowel, that is to say, the lips are not spread, and the cheeks and tongue should feel relaxed.

- a. **[I]** when it is followed by a final consonant or two consonants:

Sample:

Kid: /k**I**d/

Rich: /r**I**tʃ/

- b. Other spelling with the sound **[I]**:

women

build

gym

business

busy

guilty

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound **[iy]**:

seem
keep
feet
real

meat
E
need
please

piece
beach
leave
even

week
each
these
people

2. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound **[I]**:

rich
ship
thin

river
itch
give

live
miss
building

sick
did
fit

3. Listen and circle the word you hear:

1. a. seat
b. sit

2. a. itch
b. each

3. a. sheep
b. ship

4. a. chip
b. cheap

5. a. heat
b. hit

6. a. live
b. leave

7. a. feet
b. fit

8. a. this
b. these

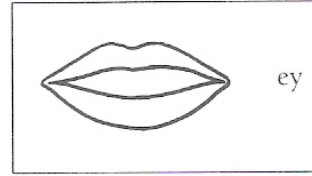
4. Read the following sentences. Include the vowels clearly so that your listener can choose the correct answer:

1. They have a (sheep/ship).
 - a. I've heard they make good pets.
 - b. I thought they were afraid of the water.
2. The team needs a new (hitter/heater).
 - a. I agree. The one we have doesn't work at all well.
 - b. Yes, we'll never score points without one.
3. Only experts prepare their (feast/fist).
 - a. A boxer can never be too careful with his hands.
 - b. Well, you can tell – they're always delicious.
4. Hey, don't (slip/sleep).
 - a. It's very icy here.
 - b. But I'm so tired.
5. (Fill/Feel) the glass.

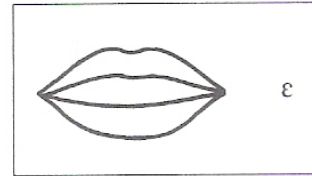
- a. It's very smooth.
 - b. With water?
6. Lucy has to (live/leave) there.
- a. That's too bad. It's a terrible neighborhood.
 - b. That's too bad. She seemed so happy in that job.

The Vowels [ey] – [ɛ]

[ey] is the vowel sound in **laid**, **stay**, and **rain**.
[ey] is a tense vowel.



In contraction with will and are, the sound [ey] in they is reduced to the [ɛ]:



Sample:

“They’ll” rhymes with **“shell”**.

“They’re” is pronounced the same as **“there”** or **“their”**.

[ɛ] is the vowel sound in **bed**, **head**, and **method**.

[ɛ] is a lax vowel, when you pronounce the [ɛ] sound your mouth should feel very relaxed. It is necessary to relax your tongue, your lips, and your cheeks.

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound [ey]:

afraid
paper
age
pay
skate

explain
grade
date
break
day

complain
taste
mail
cake
snake

space
wait
eight
say

2. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound [ɛ]:

let
head
guess
bread
hair

never
breakfast
wet
weather
egg

best
against
met
again
get

ready
pen
edge
said

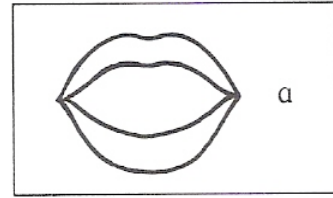
3. Read the following statements. Remember the vowels sounds:

- a. My tooth has been hurting for weeks, but I’m afraid to go and see the dentist.
- b. She’s been spreading terrible stories about me. What should I do?
- c. We never see each other anymore.
- d. I have a headache.
- e. My psychiatrist says I’m too cautious.

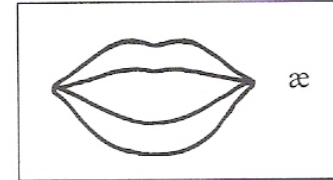
- f. How can I get to Australia?
 - g. Take a plane.
 - h. Let's get together.
 - i. Just get it over with.
 - j. Get even with him.
4. Read the following sentences. Include the vowels clearly so that your listener can choose the correct answer:
- 1. (Weight/Wet) the branches down.
 - a. They do look awfully dry.
 - b. Should I tie these bags of sand on them?
 - 2. They are going to (sell/sail) their boat.
 - a. They should get a good price – it's a beautiful boat.
 - b. I wouldn't go out in this rough weather.
 - 3. He has a lot of (dates/debts)
 - a. Credit cards can be very dangerous.
 - b. I wish my social life were as active!
 - 4. We are going to have a little (taste/test) now.
 - a. I knew I should have studied.
 - b. Oh, good. I just love chocolate.
 - 5. (Tell/Tail) that man!
 - a. He's going too fast. We'll lose him in this traffic.
 - b. Do you really think he wants to hear the truth?
 - 6. They (laid/led) the child down.
 - a. There's nothing sweeter than a sleeping child.
 - b. How did he manage to get to the top of the stairs?

The Vowels [a] – [æ] – [ə]

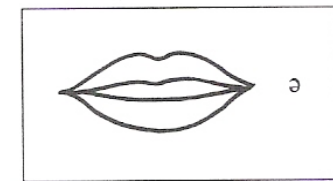
[a] is the vowel sound in **pot**, **father**, **box** and **want**. When you pronounce **[a]** the mouth is open and the tip of the tongue rest down in the bottom of the mouth (farther back than just behind the teeth. The lips **are not** rounded.



[æ] is the vowel sound in **hand**, **cat**, and **laugh**. When you pronounce **[æ]** your mouth is open but your lips are spread.



[ə] is the vowel sound in **mother**, **sudden**, **country**, **what**, and **blood**. When you say **[ə]** the mouth should be in a “neutral” position. The lips should be relaxed and open only a little. The tongue rests in the center.



- In English **[æ]** – **[a]** and most unstressed vowels are reduced to **[ə]**, regardless of their spelling.
- The **[æ]** of the word “man” is reduced in words like fireman, chairman, and policeman.
- The vowel of the word “can” is also reduced when it is followed by a verb.

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound **[a]**:

hot water	it's possible	an odd number	a large box
good job	modern life	a shopping center	on top
a broken heart	blonde heart	soccer	lock the door
an atomic bomb	a popular show	a lot	solid
a flower garden	not	stop	car

2. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound **[æ]**:

cat	lack	hat	cap
past	bag	happy	glad
plastic	stamp	glass	rather
valuable	black	relax	bad
answer	grass	plant	national

3. Listen and repeat the following words or phrases with the sound **[ə]**:

cup	monkey	jump	done
------------	---------------	-------------	-------------

hungry
does
sun
trouble

some
love
discover
luck

government
stuff
country
son

what
run
touch

4. Listen and circle the word you hear:

1. a. rob
b. rub

2. a. Duck
b. Dock

3. a. collar
b. color

4. a. not
b. nut
c. gnat

5. a. once
b. wants

6. a. Cup
b. Cap
c. Cop

7. a. hut
b. hat
c. hot

8. a. cut
b. cat
c. cot

9. a. luck
b. lack
c. lock

10. a. Bug
b. Bag
c. Bog

11. a. nut
b. Nat
c. not

5. Correctly choose one of the words in parenthesis:

- Yesterday, I found some (puppies, poppies) in the garden and put them in a vase.
- When it's cold, I wear a (cup, cap) on my head.
- I really enjoy sleeping on that (cat, cot).
- I usually take a (bag-lunch, bug-lunch) to work.
- Every morning it takes me long time to comb my hair because it's full of (knots, gnats).
- To strengthen my feet for karate, I kick my friend's (box, backs).
- I found an old (cop, cup) in my cupboard.

6. Read the following sentences. Include the vowels clearly so that your listener can choose the correct answer:

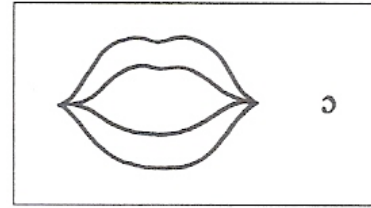
1. Do you think this (collar/color) looks good on me?
a. Not really! It looks tight. Why don't you unbutton top button?
b. Yes, you look lovely in dark red.
2. Come on honey; please give me (hog/hug)
a. Absolutely not! We already have a donkey, a monkey and a frog.
Enough is enough!
b. Not until you apologize for your comments about singing!
3. Look at that (cup/cop).

- a. Oh let's go! You've shopped enough – you don't need that cup.
 - b. I wish my social were as active!
4. Your paintings are great! But why don't you put a (duck/dock)
- a. No. It's a wilderness scene – no people, nothing manmade.
 - b. No. It's winter scene – all the ducks have gone south.

The Vowels [ɔ] – [ow]

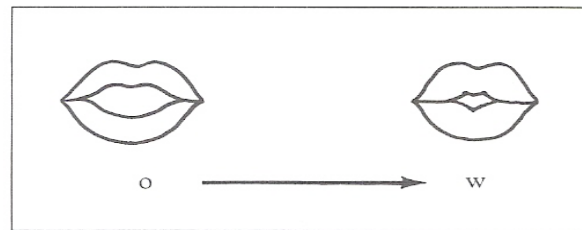
[ɔ] is the vowel sound in **brought**, **law**, **cough** and **ball**.

When you pronounce [ɔ] the tongue is back and the lips are slightly rounded.



Many speakers of English, especially on the West Coast and in the Midwest of the United States, use the sound [a] instead of the vowel sound [ɔ]. Therefore for these speakers, "la" (name of the musical note) and the word "law" sounds the same, and so do the word "cot" and "caught".

[ow] is the vowel sound in **both**, **most**, **show**, and **boat**. When you pronounce [ow] your lips should start in a position of the [ɔ] and then keep the lips in rounding position [w].



Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [ɔ]:

boss
caught
salt
draw
thought

lost
august
also
flaw
broad

wrong
audience
all
law

fault
tall
fall
awful

2. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [ow]:

go
road
throw
though
open

no
soap
tomorrow
dough
joke

hello
know
toe
frozen
home

suppose
show
Joe
drove
yellow

3. Listen and repeat the phrases:

no applesauce
a window of
tomorrow afternoon

throw it away
yellow and read
know it all

a row of chairs
bow and row
so unfriendly

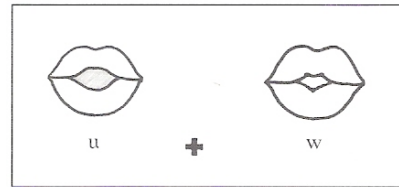
go away
cooperation
stocking

4. Read the following sentences. Include the vowels clearly so that you listener can choose the correct answer:

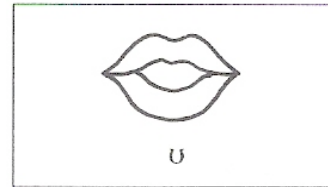
1. I dropped the (ball/bowl)
 - a. Did it break?
 - b. Did it bounce?
2. I'm standing at the entrance to the (hole/hall)
 - a. Be careful! Don't fall in!
 - b. Go down the hall to the last room.
3. What a beautiful (fall/foal)!
 - a. Yes. Its mother is beautiful too.
 - b. Yes. The trees are spectacular.
4. Why were you (called/cold)?
 - a. I left my coat home.
 - b. They wanted to invite me over.
5. I'm so happy about your (lawn/loan)
 - a. Yes, I finally got rid of the bugs.
 - b. Yes now, we can buy that house.

The Vowels [uw] – [ʊ]

[uw] is the vowel sound in **cool**, **boot**, **shoe**, and **two**. When you pronounce **[uw]** the lips should start in a **[u]** position and continue rounding to a **[w]**.



[ʊ] is the vowel sound in **put**, **should**, **good**, and **took**. When you pronounce **[ʊ]** the sound is more relaxed and the lips are less rounded than the sound **[uw]**.



[yʊw] is the sound in **view**, **argue**, **use**. Many **[yʊw]** words were borrowed from French. The French vowel was **[ü]**. Native English speakers couldn't make this vowel, so they borrowed the words with **[yʊw]**.

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound **[uw]**:

June	include	introduce	fool
blue	soon	truth	two
stewed	cool	choose	student
rude	revolution	do	to
who	through	suit	juice

2. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound **[ʊ]**:

good	foot	look	hood
pull	sugar	push	would
should	woman	book	cook
stood	could	put	

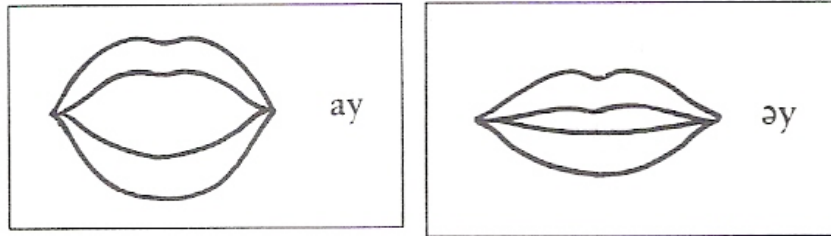
3. Read the following phrases:

on Tuesday	cool day	newspaper	student
who is he?	two of them	a new suit	don't lose it
too old	do it	cowboy boots	true or false
music lessons	just a few	beautiful view	in the future

The Diphthongs [aw] – [ay] – [oy]

A diphthong is a vowel plus the sound [w] or [y]. English has three diphthongs: [aw], [ay], and [oy]:

- [aw] is the vowel sound in words such as: **house**, **now**, and **cow**.
- [ay] is the vowel sound in words such as: **die**, **try**, and **ice**.
- [oy] is the vowel sound in words such as: **boy**, **noise**, and **toy**.



Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [aw]:

town
doubt
mouse
cow

crowd
shout
loud
allow

count
about
mountain
thousand

now
south
pound

2. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [ay]:

time
nine
child
type
fried

privacy
find
cry
lie
sight

while
ice
try
die
frighten

climb
decide
by
night
high

3. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [oy]:

toy
join
annoy
coin
employer

boy
destroy
loyal
noisy
loyalty

noise
joy
oil
soil

voice
enjoy
poison
boil

4. Read the following sentences and expressions:

- I knew you were strong, but it was an **eye opener** to see you lift the car.
- I'm pretty comfortable living by myself, but **every now and then** I feel homesick.
- **How in the world** did he escape from that burning building?
- Many **child actors** aren't able to continue their career successfully as adults.
- The new baby is the **joy of their life**.
- Our neighbor is going to **keep an eye on** our house while we're on vacation.
- **Why in the world** did you lend him your car? He's a terrible driver.
- If we don't leave right away, the storm will be here and we won't be able to leave. It's **now or never**.

Chapter 2: Consonants

The consonant sounds are classified in two categories:

1. **Voiced Consonants:** They are sounds produced when the vocal cords vibrate.
2. **Voiceless Consonants:** They are sounds produced without vocal cord vibration.

Consonant Chart

Voiced Consonants

[b]	=	boat
[d]	=	down
[g]	=	go
[l]	=	late
[m]	=	man
[n]	=	not
[ŋ]	=	sing
[r]	=	red
[v]	=	very
[w]	=	want
[z]	=	zero/laser
[ʒ]	=	pleasure
[dʒ]	=	judge
[ð]	=	this

Voiceless Consonant

[f]	=	fish
[h]	=	home
[k]	=	kiss / cold
[p]	=	post
[s]	=	sick / nice
[t]	=	two
[ʃ]	=	ship
[θ]	=	think
[tʃ]	=	check

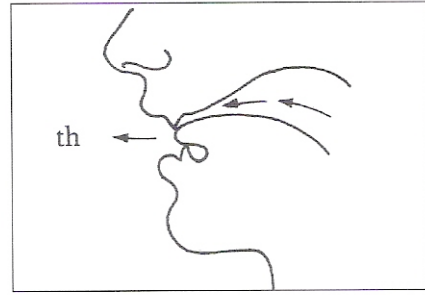
Hint: the sound **[y]** is considered as a vowel and as a consonant. All the vowel sounds are voiced.

The consonant are classified into two groups depending on the vibration or absence of it in the vocal cords. The two groups of consonants are the **voiced** consonants and the **voiceless** consonants. We classified a sound as **voiced** when the vocal cords vibrate as we pronounce it, and **voiceless** if it is pronounced without such vibration.

To identify if a sound is voiced or voiceless, place your thumb and you index finger lightly against the sides of your larynx (the central part of your throat); then pronounce the sounds **[z]** and **[s]**. You should be able to feel the **vibration** of the vocal cords as you say **[z]** and notice **no vibration** as you say **[s]**.

The Consonants [θ] – [ð]

The sounds [θ] and [ð] are both spelled with “th”. When you say [θ] the tongue should be between your teeth. The sound [θ] is voiceless. Your breath should come out in a hiss sound. When you pronounce [ð] the tongue should be also between the lips. The sound [ð] is voiced.



Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [θ]:

think
three
bath
healthy

thing
theater
method
math

throw
nothing
thanks
fifth

theory
author
sympathy
north

2. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [ð]:

that
though
other
smooth
soothe

there
together
weather
breathe
brother

these
other
although
bathe
their

those
weather
mother
then

3. Listen and repeat the following phrases:

thank you
I'd rather not
over there
I don't think so
through thick and thin

a third
thanks a lot
this one
something else
back and forth

a thousand
the fourth
I think so
both of these
think highly

4. Listen and circle the word you heard:

1. a. math
b. mass

2. a. thin
b. tin

3. a. then
b. Zen

4. a. three
b. tree

5. a. with
b. wit

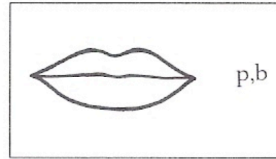
6. a. breathe
b. breeze

7. a. thanks
b. tanks

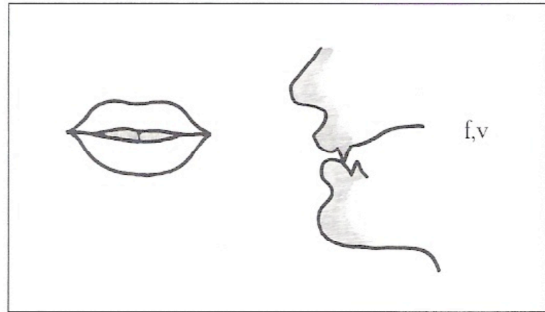
8. a. thing
b. sing

The Consonants [p] – [b] – [f] – [v] and [w]

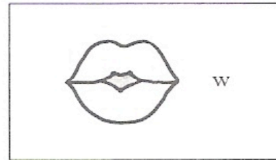
[p] and **[b]** are the sounds in **pack** and you say **[p]** and **[b]**, your lips close briefly air for a moment. **[p]** is voiceless and [b]



[f] and **[v]** are the sounds in **fox** and **When**. When you say **[f]** and **[v]**, your top teeth gently touch the inside top of your lower lip. **[f]** is voiceless and **[v]** is voiced.



[w] is the sound in **w**ay and **now**. It is similar to the vowel in **cool**, but more rounded. To make a beginning **[w]**, the lips start tightly rounded and unround. To make a final **[w]**, the lips start unrounded and then round.



In formal speaking, words spelled with **wh** pronounced **[hw]**: when, where, white,

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound **[p]**:

person
cup
population
polite

pink
stop
oppportunity
suppose

copy
receptionist
potatoes
pollution

happy
people
purple
kept

2. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound **[b]**:

best
rob
bad
describe
battle

begin
somebody
baseball
boat
bottle

lobby
Bobby
Robert
berry
bother

about
baby
volleyball
bible
bumblebee

3. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [f]:

fix
difficult
funny
enough

finish
fire **fighter**
frozen
rough

awful
belief
fingernails
proof

laugh
fulfill
foreign
fall

fight

ele**ph**ant

pharmacist

phone

4. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound **[v]**:

very

vase

give

save

valentine

voice

vacuum

five

prove

elevator

love

never

twelve

vest

movie

live

heaven

con**v**ivial

vampire

vacation

5. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound **[w]**:

wind

how

awake

where

we

want

now

quietly

wander

white

wonderful

twenty

beware

wow

whale

away

question

wine

west

wonder

6. Listen and circle the word you heard:

1. a. berry

b. very

c. wary

2. a. bull

b. full

c. wool

3. a. pear

b. fair

c. wear

4. a. pine

b. fine

c. wine

5. a. best

b. vest

c. west

6. a. bow

b. vow

c. wow

7. a. Pete

b. feet

c. beet

8. a. safe

b. save

c. ape

7. Listen and repeat the following phrases:

funny **p**eople

twenty **q**uestions

purple **f**ingertips

difficult **v**ocabulary

an **a**wful **m**ovie

frozen **p**otatoes

voting **b**oth

foreign **l**anguage

brave **f**ire **f**ighters

soft **v**oice

wasteful **v**isitors

wonderful **p**oetry

finger **p**uppets

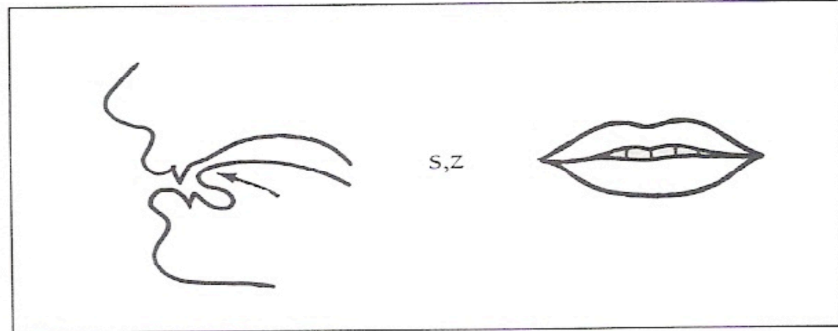
five and a **q**uarter

vulnerable **p**erson

The Consonants [s] – [z] – [ʃ] and [ʒ]

[s] is the voiceless sound in **sad**, **last**, and **missing**. [z] is the voiced sound in **zero**, **rise**, and **reason**. When you say [s] or [z], the tip of your tongue is usually raised, pointing toward but not touching the alveolar ridge.

Some words that end in [s] as nouns or adjectives end in [z] as verbs. The vowel before the voiced [z] is longer than the vowel before voiceless [s].



Noun/Adjective: [s]

A **use**
An exc**use**
The adv**ise**
A cho**ice**
A hous**e**
A cl**ose** relative
A lo**ose** shirt

Verb: [z]

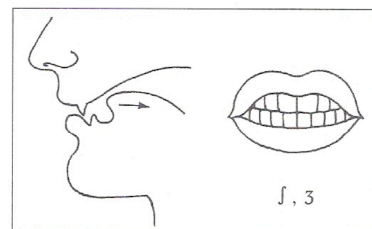
To **use**
To exc**use**
To adv**ise**
To cho**ose**
To hous**e**
To cl**ose** the door
To lo**se** something

Spelling and other details

◆ [s]
s: **y**es, **s**ome, **this**, **s**ister
ss: **m**essy, **kiss**, **cl**ass, **p**ossible
se: **h**orse, **prom**ise, **w**orse, **m**ouse
Other spellings
c (before i, e, y): **cent**, **city**, **circle**, bicycle.
ce: **n**ice, **p**olice, **f**ence, **off**ice
sc: **science**, **sc**ent, **sc**enery, **sc**issors
x (pronounced [ks]): **next**, **ex**cellent
In these words, s is silent: **i**sland, **a**isle.

◆ [z]
z, zz, ze: **zoo**, **crazy**, **dizzy**, **size**
s: **e**asy, **b**usy, **m**usic, **vis**it
se: **ple**ase, **r**ise, **b**ecause, **th**ose
Other spellings
Ss: **scissors**, **dessert**, **possess**
x (pronounced [gz]): **ex**ample, **ex**istence.

[ʃ] is the sound in **shoe**, **nation**, and **wash**. [ʒ] is the sound in **television** and **beige**. To make [ʃ] and [ʒ], the tongue is pulled back and up toward the roof of the mouth. The lips protrude slightly.



[ʃ] is a voiceless sound and [ʒ] is a voiced sound.

Spelling and other details

◆ [ʃ]

sh: **shop**, **wish**, **fashion**

Other spellings

ti: **nation**, **condition**, **patient**.

ci: **special**, **musician**, **social**

ssi: **permission**, **discussion**, **depression**

Unusual spellings

Machine, **Chicago**, **chic**, **ocean**, **insurance**,

◆ [ʒ]

si: **decision**, **vision**, **television**

Other spellings

su: **casual**, **treasure**, **pleasure**, **measure**.

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words:

busy

buzz

was

easy

rose

raisin

cause

wise

dizzy

noise

reason

his

lazy

cousin

crazy

rising

2. Listen and circle the word you heard:

1. a. race
b. raise

2. a. lease
b. Lee's

3. a. rice
b. rise

4. a. advice
b. advise

5. a. hiss
b. his

6. a. place
b. plays

7. a. loose
b. lose

8. a. ice
b. eyes

3. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [ʃ]:

shoot
sugar
vacation
wish

shine
washer
pressure
push

shoe
national
cash
ship

Chicago
relation
shy
hairbrush

4. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [ʒ]:

decision
usual
leisure
treasure

pleasure
azure
television
occasion

Asia
measure
explosion
usually

division
beige
vision
massage

The Consonants [tʃ] – [dʒ]

[tʃ] is the sound in **ch**icken, **watch**, and **rich**est. [dʒ] is the sound in **j**uice, **age**, and **re**gion. [tʃ] is a voiceless sound and [dʒ] is a voiced sound.

When [tʃ] or [dʒ] occurs at the end of a word and the following word begins with a consonant, pronounce the [tʃ] or [dʒ], but let it “die away” quickly. Do not release it strongly or put a little vowel sound between the two words. Then say the next word.

watch' television

rich' woman

language' teacher

When [tʃ] or [dʒ] occurs at the end of a word and the following word begins with a vowel, join the final [tʃ] or [dʒ] to the vowel.

catch_a ball

lunch_is over

college_education

Sometimes students confuse [tʃ] and [ʃ] (*much* and *mush*) or [dʒ] and [ʒ] (*legion* and *lesion*). The difference between [tʃ] and [ʃ] is that [tʃ] starts with [t] sound (the difference between [dʒ] and [ʒ] is that [dʒ] starts with a [d] sound. Be sure to pronounce the [t] of [tʃ] (even though you will not hear it as a separate sound). The [t] of [tʃ] makes words like *much* sound different from words like *mush* (likewise, be sure to pronounce the [d] of [dʒ]).

[tʃ]	[ʃ]	[dʒ]	[ʒ]
Much	Mush	Legion	Lesion
Watch	Wash	A Cajun	occasion

Spelling and other details

◆ [tʃ]

ch: **lunch**, **chair**, **chance**

(In a few words the letter *ch* have a [k]

sound: **ache**, **chorus**, **Christmas**; in some words, the letters *ch* have a [ʃ] sound:

chef, **Chicago**, **machine**)

tch: **watch**, **match**, **kitchen**

Other spellings

t: **picture**, **mixture**, **future**, **natural**

c: **cello**, **cellist**

◆ [dʒ]

j: **jazz**, **just**, **July**

ge: **George**, **dangerous**, **college**

dge: **bridge**, **edge**, **judge**

Other spellings

du: **graduate**, **education**, **individual**

di: **soldier**

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [tʃ]:

check
nat**ure**

chalk
teach**er**

cheam
cat**ch**

kitch**en**
s**uch**

2. Listen and repeat the following words with the sound [dʒ]:

jazz
pigeon

join
engine

gym
age

refrigerator
college

3. Listen and circle the word you heard:

1. a. choice
b. Joyce

2. a. edge
b. etch

3. a. occasion
b. a Cajun

4. a. mush
b. much

5. a. legion
b. lesion

6. a. H
b. age

7. a. cheap
b. sheep

8. a. cash
b. catch

The Consonants [r] – [l]

[r] is the sound in **red**, and **road**. To make [r], the tongue starts in a turned back position and then “uncurls”. It does not touch the top of the mouth as it uncurls. [l] is the sound in **like**, and **left**.



Spelling and other details

The letter w is silent before r: ~~w~~rite, ~~w~~rong, ~~W~~ring, ~~w~~restle, ~~w~~rap, ~~w~~reck, ~~w~~rist.

The letter l is silent in these words: walk, talk, Chalk, half, calf, would, could, should, yolk.

Practice

1. Listen and circle the word you heard:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. a. lay
b. ray | 2. a. arrive
b. alive | 3. a. glass
b. grass | 4. a. climb
b. crime |
| 5. a. right
b. light | 6. a. fly
b. fry | | |

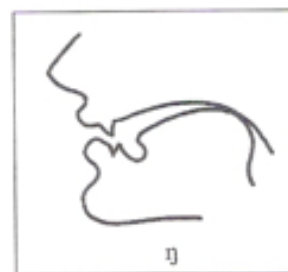
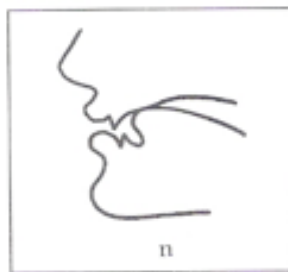
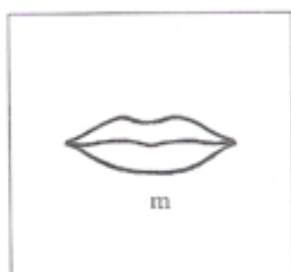
2. Read the following sentences. Include the sound clearly so that your listener can choose the correct answer:

- Do you have the (whit/right/light) book?
 - No, all my books are green
 - No, all my books are heavy.
 - Yes, this is the right one.
- Do you like to eat French (flies/fries)?
 - No, I hate all insects.
 - No, I am allergic to potatoes.

3. Don't step on that (grass/glass)
 - a. We want it to grow.
 - b. You'll cut yourself.
4. There's a big (crowd/cloud) over there.
 - a. It looks like rain.
 - b. I wonder what they're looking at.

The Consonants [m] – [n] and [ŋ]

[m], [n] and [ŋ] are called nasal sound. The air comes out the nose. [m] is the sound in **m**outh, **sum**mer, and **h**ome. [m] is made by closing the lips and letting the air pass out through the nose. [n] is the sound in **n**ose, **s**nake, and **n**ine. [n] is made by touching the tongue tip behind the top teeth and letting the air pass out through the nose.



[ŋ] is the sound in **s**inger, **h**ang, and **l**ong. [ŋ] is made by touching the back of the tongue against the back top of the mouth and letting the air pass out through the nose. [ŋ] can occur in the middle of a word or at the end of a word, but it never begins a word in English. *-ng* is the common spelling of [ŋ]. In many *-ng* spellings, the [g] is not pronounced (for example, *sing* does not have a [g] sound). In a few words, like *finger*, the [g] is pronounced. In addition, several adjectives that end in [ŋ] add a [g] sound in the comparative and superlative.

Adjective (No [g])	Comparative And Superlative ([g])
young g athlete [ŋ]	younger, young est [ŋg]
long g ago [ŋ]	longer, long est [ŋg]
strong g engine [ŋ]	stronger, strong est [ŋg]

Spelling and other details

- ◆ [m]
m, mm: **m**om, **M**ay, **sum**mer, **s**mall
- Other spellings
mn (silent n): **autumn**, **hymn**
- ◆ [n]
n, nn: **n**one, **ne**ver, **s**nake, **sunny**

- Other spellings
kn, gn: **k**now, **k**nee, **kn**ife, **forei**gn, **sign**
- ◆ [ŋ]
ng: **sing**, **ringing**, **wrong**, **young**
n before g, k: **Eng**lish, **ang**ry, **bank**, **think**

Practice

1. Listen and repeat the following phrases:

[m]	[n]	[ŋ]
1. make	10. all of a sudden	19. sing a song
2. famous	11. I don't know	20. a younger sister
3. a small amount	12. under control	21. strong feelings
4. damage	13. no, not now	22. the phone rang
5. some time	14. sooner or later	23. a saving bank
6. the same time	15. frequently	24. a fish tank
7. name	16. one at a time	25. the last warning
8. at home	17. conservation	26. a long time ago
9. come back	18. I understand	27. a mother tongue

Plural Forms

In English to make a noun plural or possessive or conjugate a verb in the third person in simple form of the present tense, we have to add an “s” or “es” to end the word. These endings are pronounced according to the phonetic rules in three different forms: **[z]**, **[s]**, or **[Iz]**.²

Consonant Chart

1. **[z]** after all voiced consonants except **[z]**, **[ʒ]**, and after all vowel sounds:

games **[geɪmz]** calls **[kɔlz]**

2. **[s]** after all voiceless consonants except **[s]** and **[ʃ]**:

wraps **[ræəspz]** Jack's **[dʒæks]**

3. As a separate syllable **[Iz]** or after a sibilant **[z, s, ʒ, ʃ]**

dishes **[dɪʃIz]** George's **[dʒɔrdʒIz]**

The above rules apply only when an “s” is added to a word as an ending. If the “s” is a part of the basic word itself, there is no way to decide whether it is **[s]** or **[z]**, in these cases we must familiarize with them.

[z]	[s]
as [æz]	this [ðIz]
has [hæz]	thus [ðəs]
his [hIz]	us [əs]
is [Iz]	yes [jɛs]
	was [was]

² Manual of American English Pronunciation 4th Edition 1985.

Past Tense Endings

The regular past tense has three pronunciations: **[t]**, **[d]** and **[əd]** or **[ɪd]**. Verbs already ending in **[t]** or **[d]** add an extra syllable: **[əd]** or **[ɪd]**.

visit (2 syllables): vi-sit
visited (3 syllables): vi-si-ted

land (1 syllable)
landed (2 syllables): lan-ded

All other verbs add the consonant **[t]** or **[d]**. Verbs that end in voiceless sounds add **[t]**; verbs that end in voiced sounds (including vowels) add **[d]**. The **[t]** or **[d]** ending forms a new consonant cluster or ending but does not add a new syllable.

like (1): [lay**k**]
liked (1): [lay**kt**]

rob (1): [rab]
robbed (1): [rab**d**]

study (2): [stədiy]
studied (2): [stədiy**d**]

Practice

1. Listen and write down the final sound of the past form of each verb:

liked [_____]	rained [_____]	used [_____]
loved [_____]	kissed [_____]	grabbed [_____]
controlled [_____]	studied [_____]	wanted [_____]
waited [_____]	visited [_____]	arrived [_____]
played [_____]	parked [_____]	stopped [_____]

2. Listen to the sentences. If you hear a past verb, write "so did I." If you hear a present verb, write "so do I.":

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. I (need/needed) some money. | So _____ I. |
| 2. I (travel/traveled) a lot. | So _____ I. |
| 3. They (work/worked) hard. | So _____ I. |
| 4. I (ask/asked) a lot of questions. | So _____ I. |
| 5. They (watch/watched) the news. | So _____ I. |

Chapter 3: Stress

Unfortunately, there are no infallible rules for determining which syllables of a word must be stressed. However, there are some observations that may help you.

The majority of two syllables words are accented on the first syllable. This type of stress is called **primary stress**.

[nɛvər]

The largest group of exceptions to this generalization is made up of words that begin with a prefix. Most of the words that begin with a prefix are accented on the second syllable.

[dɪspléy]

There are words that have a **secondary stress**. Words with three or more syllables may have both primary and secondary stress. With words of four or more syllables, secondary stress is often placed two syllables in front of the primary stressed syllable.

In English, most unstressed vowels are pronounced [ə] or [ɪ], no matter how they are spelled.

devélop [divéləp] thóusand [θáwzənd] mínute [mínət]

Unstressed -y and -ow endings keep their [iy] and [ow] pronunciations. When the next word begins with a vowel, join [y] or [w] to that vowel.

study [stədiy]: study~English

narrow [nərow]: narrow~entrance

Words with three or more syllables may have both primary and secondary stress. With words of four or more syllables, secondary stress is often placed two syllables in front of the primary stressed syllable.

còrporátion

phòtográphic

The -ate endings of adjectives or nouns are usually unstressed and pronounced [ət]. As verbs, they have secondary stress and are pronounced [eyt].

Adjective/Noun**Verb**

graduate [ət] school
 duplicate [ət] copy
 an associate [ət]

When will you graduate [eyt]?
 Please duplicate [eyt] this for me.
 Don't associate [eyt] with them.

-ize endings are not reduced. They have secondary stress and are pronounced [ayz].

Réalize [ríyəlàyz] criticize [krítəsàyz]

A large group of words, which may be use either as nouns or verbs without change in their spelling, have difference in stress to indicate the difference in usage. In such cases, the noun has primary accent on the first syllable, the verb on the last.

NounsVerbs

/kánflíkt/	conflict	/kənflíkt/
/kántést/	contest	/kəntést/
/kántrækt/	contract	/kəntɹækt/
/kántræst/	contrast	/kəntɹæst/
/kánvərt/	convert	/kənvərt/
/dézərt/	desert	/dizərt/
/ínkláyn/	incline	/ínkláyn/
/ínkriys/	increase	/ínkriys/
/ínsərt/	insert	/ínsərt/
/ínsəlt/	insult	/ínsəlt/
/əbdžíkt/	object	/əbdžékt/
/ówvərflów/	overflow	/ówvərflów/
/pərmít/	permit	/pərmít/
/prézənt/	present	/prízənt/
/prágrɪs/	progress	/prəgrés/
/prədžékt/	project	/prədžékt/
/prówtést/	protest	/prətést/
/rébəl/	rebel	/rəbéəl/
/rékərd/	record	/ríkórd/
/sərvéy/	survey	/sərvéy/
/səspékt/	suspect	/səspékt/

Chapter 4: Reductions

The basic reason for the reductions is based on the pressure that the speaker feels to make pronunciation of a word or an expression easier. In formal oral or written English situations, reductions are less acceptable. However this is not a justification to hear or use them in these situations.³

There are some basic rules when linking words:

1. The words end in consonant and the next words start with a vowel:
an orange
2. The words end in vowel and the next words start with a consonant:
a car
3. The words end in vowel and the next words start with a vowel:
to agree
4. The words end in consonant and the next words start with a consonant:
want to

This rule applies only when the consonants are the same.

Dropping "H"

When the pronouns and the auxiliary verbs that begin with an "h", lose **[h]** inside a sentence and are joined to the preceding word.

The unstressed *h* words are personal pronouns and auxiliary verbs that begin with **[h]**: *he, him, his, have, has, had*.

Unstressed *h* words lose **[h]** when they are inside a phrase. This reduced pronunciation is not slang or colloquial-it is standard, everyday English.

let her (like *letter*) give him the book

The vowel in the auxiliary verbs *have, has, had*, is reduced to [əv]:

Where have [əv] you been?

Unstressed *h* words keep [h] at the beginning of a sentence or after a pause.

He [hiy] left. I saw [thinking, long pause] her [hər] report on the desk.

³ Focus on Pronunciation / Students Book 1993.

Contractions

Use contracted forms of verbs and negatives when you speak. Full forms sound formal in speaking, and not as “friendly” as contracted forms.

When you contract *would* to 'd, pronounce the **[d]** clearly to avoid misunderstanding: *I like soup* does not have the same meaning as *I'd like soup*.

When *will* is contracted to 'll, pronouns ending in **[y]** or **[w]** are reduced.

I'll do it. (rhymes with *doll*)

You'll do it. (rhymes with *pull*)

He'll/She'll/We'll do it. (rhymes with *still*)

They'll do it. (rhymes with *bell*)

When *are* is contracted to 're, pronouns are reduced. When a noun and pronoun are joined by *and*, *are* is pronounced like the comparative ending **[ər]**.

You're sick (rhymes with *fur*)

They're here (sounds like *there*)

Joan and **I are** going. [ayər] (rhymes with *fire*)

Practice

1. Read the following sentences and then pronounce them:

1. (A and B are friends)

A: We're having a little party this weekend, and we wondered if you and Jim could come.

B: Oh, I'm sorry. We'd love to but we're going to see my parents this weekend.

A: Oh, that's okay. Maybe next time.

2. (A and B are best friends)

A: Let's go out for lunch. It's stopped raining and I'm tired of eating at home.

B: Yeah, but all the good restaurants're too far away. Anyway, I don't really feel like going anywhere. Let's just stay here.

A: You're so lazy!

Chapter 5: Intonation

Intonation is the tune of what we say. It refers to the pattern of high or low notes **in a phrase or a sentence**. That is to say, it is the combination of the musical tones on which we pronounce the syllables that make up our speech. In intonation is important to make reference to the meaning of the word **pitch**. Pitch refers to the high or low note **on a syllable**. The range of the voice is the difference between the highest and lowest notes. When a speaker uses the full range of the voice in a discourse, it is more intelligible and more interesting to the listener.⁴

In marking intonation, we shall use a simplified system that divides the tones into four types: low, normal, high and extra-high. A line drawn at the base of the letters of a word indicates that that word is pronounced on a normal tone, a line above the word marks a high tone, a line some distance below the word marks a low tone, and a line some distance above the word marks an extra high tone.⁵

How are you?

I'll have cream and sugar

I know more about it than he does

Rising-Falling Falling Intonation

It is at the end of the sentence that native speakers of English. In this position in certain types of sentences the voice often rises above normal, and the falls below normal. The high note normally coincides with the last sentence-stress:

The situation is difficult.

I said I couldn't hear you.

⁴ Focus on Pronunciation.

⁵ Manual of American English Pronunciation.

Use of the Rising-Falling Intonation

In the English rising-falling intonation is normally used at the end of:

1. Simple Statements or Facts (declarative sentences):

This is my wife

He hasn't said a word.

2. Commands:

Come to see me.

3. "Wh" Questions:

What is the matter?

How are you feeling?

Why is he angry?

Practice

1. Mark the rising-falling intonation of each sentences:

1. Let's look at the people.
2. What shall we order?
3. Where is the waiter?
4. He hasn't cleaned up the table.
5. He's there by the coffee machine.
6. May I see the menu?

7. Do you know what you want?
8. Pass me the napkin holder.
9. We better order as soon as we can.
10. I'll take the regular dinner.

Use of the Rising Intonation

In English, rising intonation is normally used at the end of **yes/no questions**. The voice normally goes up to a high note on the last sentence's stress. Rising intonation suggests that something further must be said, either by the speaker or by the listener.

Can you help me?

have, has, had

Has he written to you?

Have they finished?

am, is, are, was, were

Is she at home?

Were they asleep?

do, does, did

Does he like it?

Did they see it?

Practice

1. Mark the rising intonation of the following yes/no questions.
 1. Do you remember me?
 2. Is there a room for me?

3. Do you have anything cheaper?
4. Will you keep it long?
5. Are you going to stay with us?
6. Are you leaving here?
7. Is that Phil over there?
8. Will you meet us this evening?

Use of Non-Final Intonation

Non-final intonation is when in a sentence we need to pronounce a note higher than normal. This type of intonation is used when a speaker wants to call special attention of the listener. Non-Final intonation refers to content or functions words.

What do **yóu** know about pólitics?

There are **lóts** Of cigarettes in the box.

He has an **unúsual** number of friends.

With a particular frequency special attention is thus called to *demonstrative* and *interrogative* words.

I think **thát** is a góod idéa.

What do you want with a car.

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